

Feedback from police custody

Introduction

The Independent Custody Visiting Association (ICVA) leads, supports and represents independent custody visiting schemes across the UK. ICVA is requesting additional feedback from schemes throughout the Covid pandemic. ICVA is sharing this monitoring with national bodies to help to identify strengths and challenges and help to resolve problems. This month ICVA requested information from schemes on detainee access to washing facilities, attendance of safeguards and staffing in custody.

We have let schemes know that as much has returned to business as usual currently, we will revert to our normal reporting methods and, therefore, this will be the last in this series of reports. Should circumstances with the pandemic change, ICVA may reinstate these reports at a later date.

Feedback

The following feedback summarises responses from independent custody visiting schemes from March 2022. ICVA received feedback from 22 police force areas across this time.

Key messages

- None of the 22 responders noted any issues with detainees accessing face to face interactions with safeguards such as appropriate adults and solicitors.
- 11 of the 22 schemes reported that there were ongoing or recent issues with food supplies in their area. Most schemes have alternative arrangements in place for the meal items that are not able to be provided. ICVA have raised this issue with the NPCC at the Heads of Custody meeting to follow up with the provider noted by schemes.
- All of the schemes responding either have already or are in the process of recruiting more ICVs to return to pre-Covid capacity. Three schemes have completed their recruitment and are now up to capacity, the other 19 schemes are either undertaking their first, or repeat rounds of recruitment to get up to scheme capacity for visiting.
- One scheme noted good practice in that PPE was being maintained in police custody, and another noted that they had recently delivered refresher training to ICVs on the inspectorates, ICVA and the NPM amongst other topics.

Using feedback

ICVA continues to share feedback with national operational organisations such as the NPCC and Home Office.